

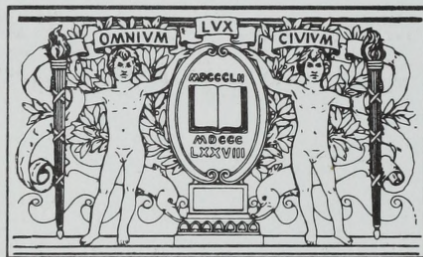
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LEGENDS FROM MEXICO & CENTRAL AMERICA

# A QUETZALCÓATL TALE OF CORN



BY MARILYN PARKE & SHARON PANIK ■ ILLUSTRATIONS BY LYNN CASTLE



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LEGENDS FROM MEXICO & CENTRAL AMERICA

# A QUETZALCÓATL

## TALE OF CORN

Retold by Marilyn Parke and Sharon Panik

Illustrations by Lynn Castle

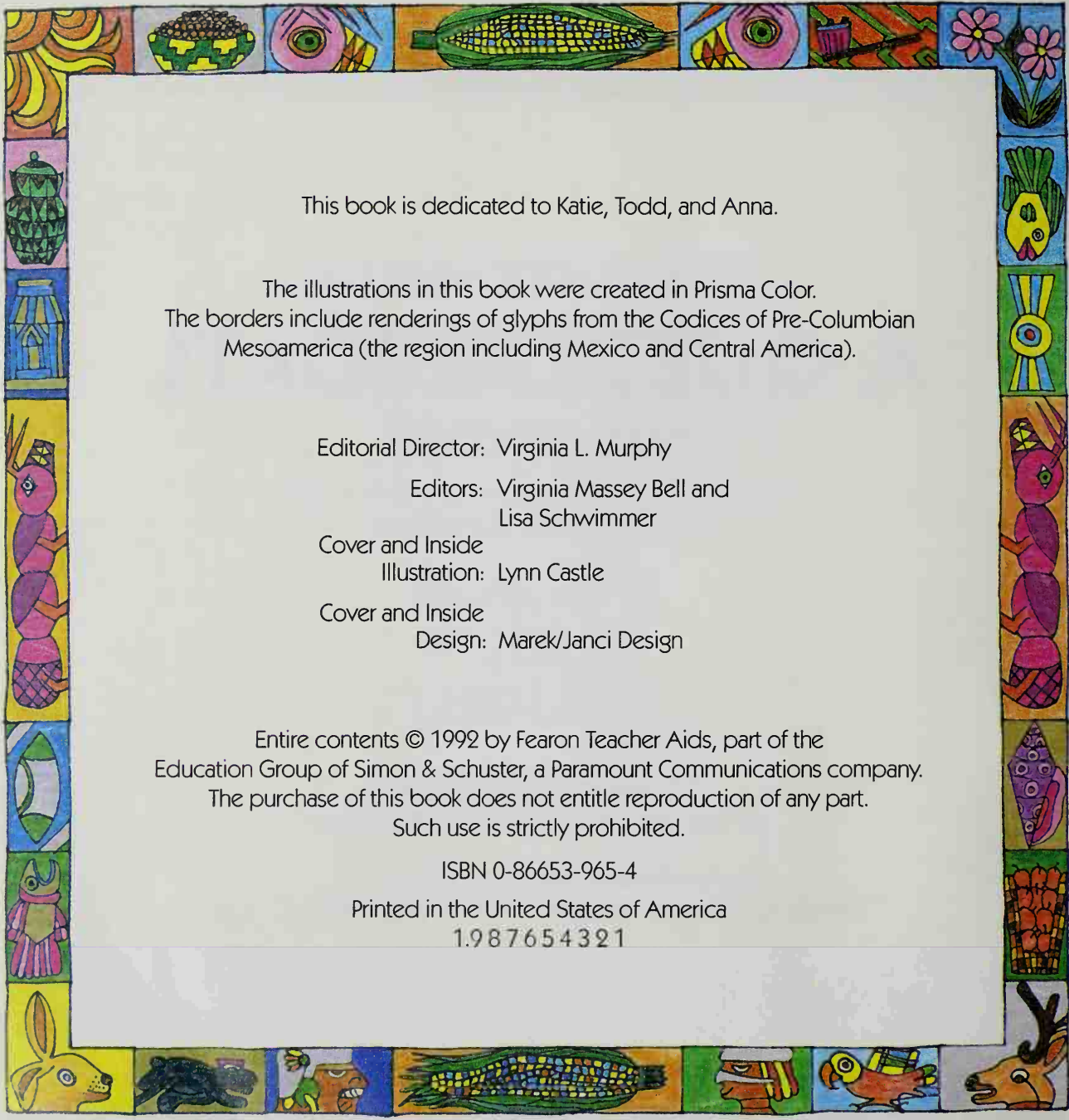
Consultants to the Series

R. Robert and Maria Elena Robbins

Fearon Teacher Aids

Simon & Schuster Supplementary Education Group





This book is dedicated to Katie, Todd, and Anna.

The illustrations in this book were created in Prisma Color.  
The borders include renderings of glyphs from the Codices of Pre-Columbian  
Mesoamerica (the region including Mexico and Central America).

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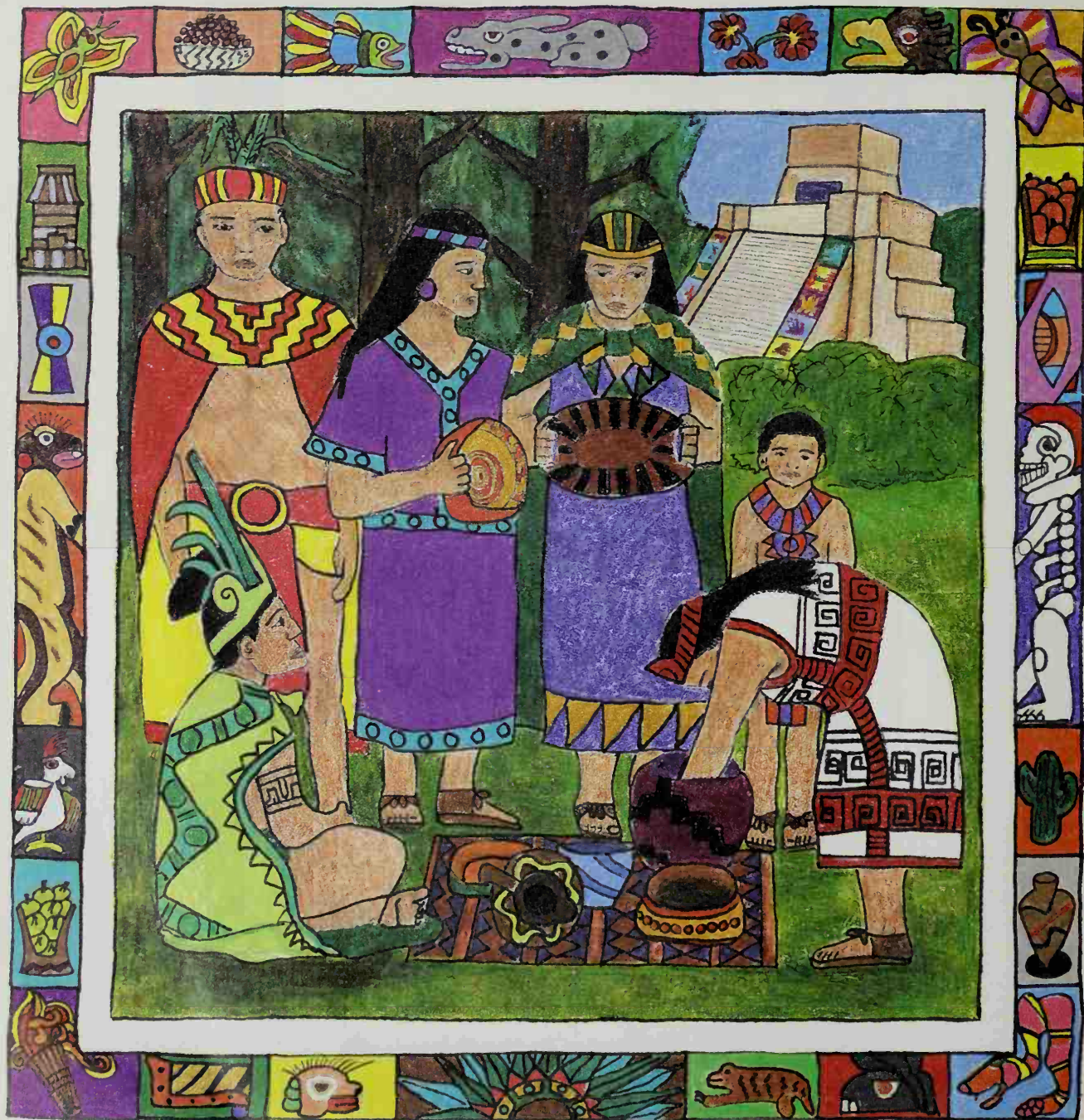


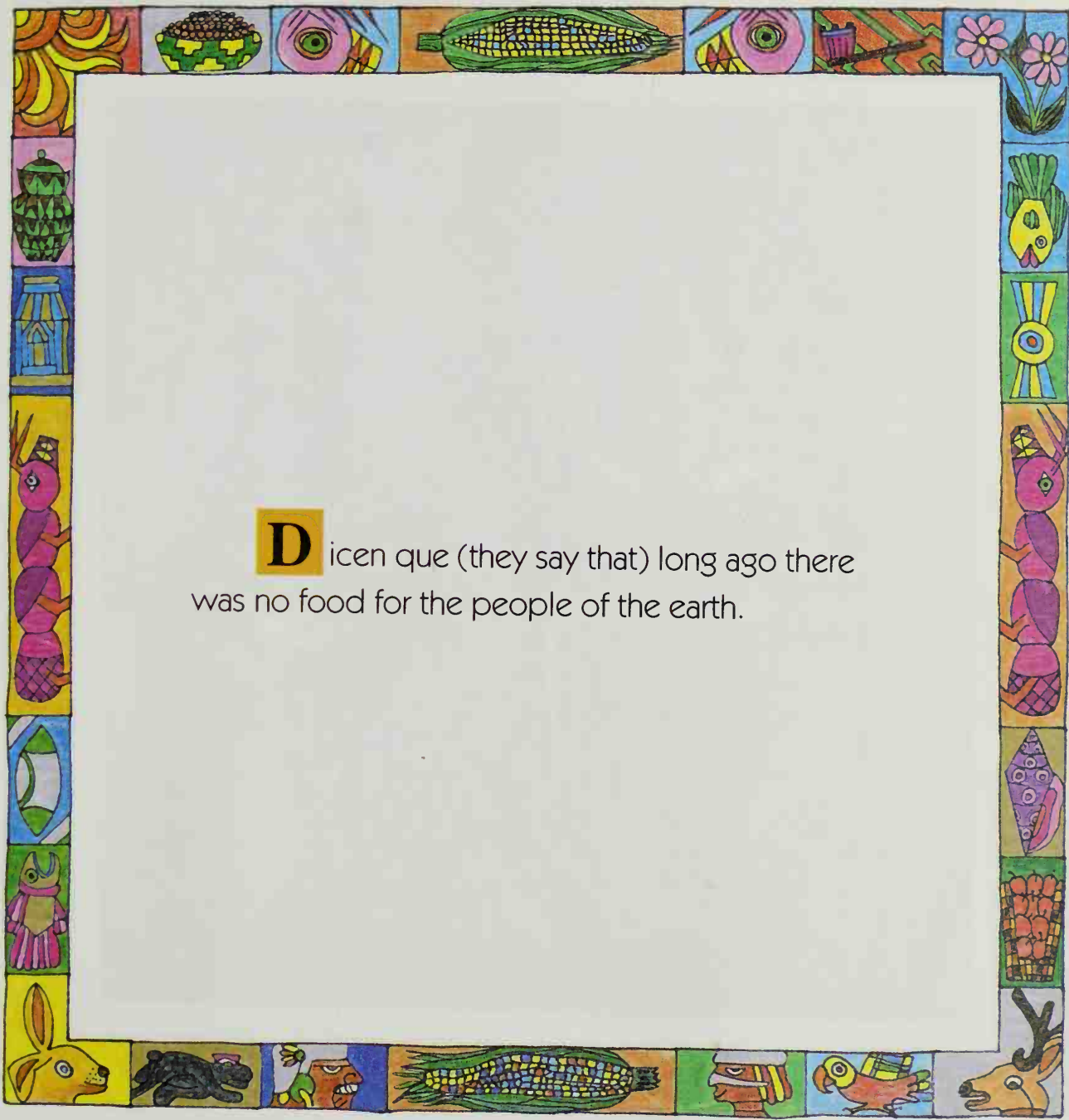




**Q**uetzalcoatl, the priest, gathered the children around the fire. He told them a story of the old, old days of his ancestor, Quetzalcoatl, the god. He told them first that Quetzalcoatl often took the form of a feathered serpent or bird-snake and that he once followed a trail of ants to Tonacatépetl, the Mountain of Sustenance, to find food for his people. This is the story that he told.







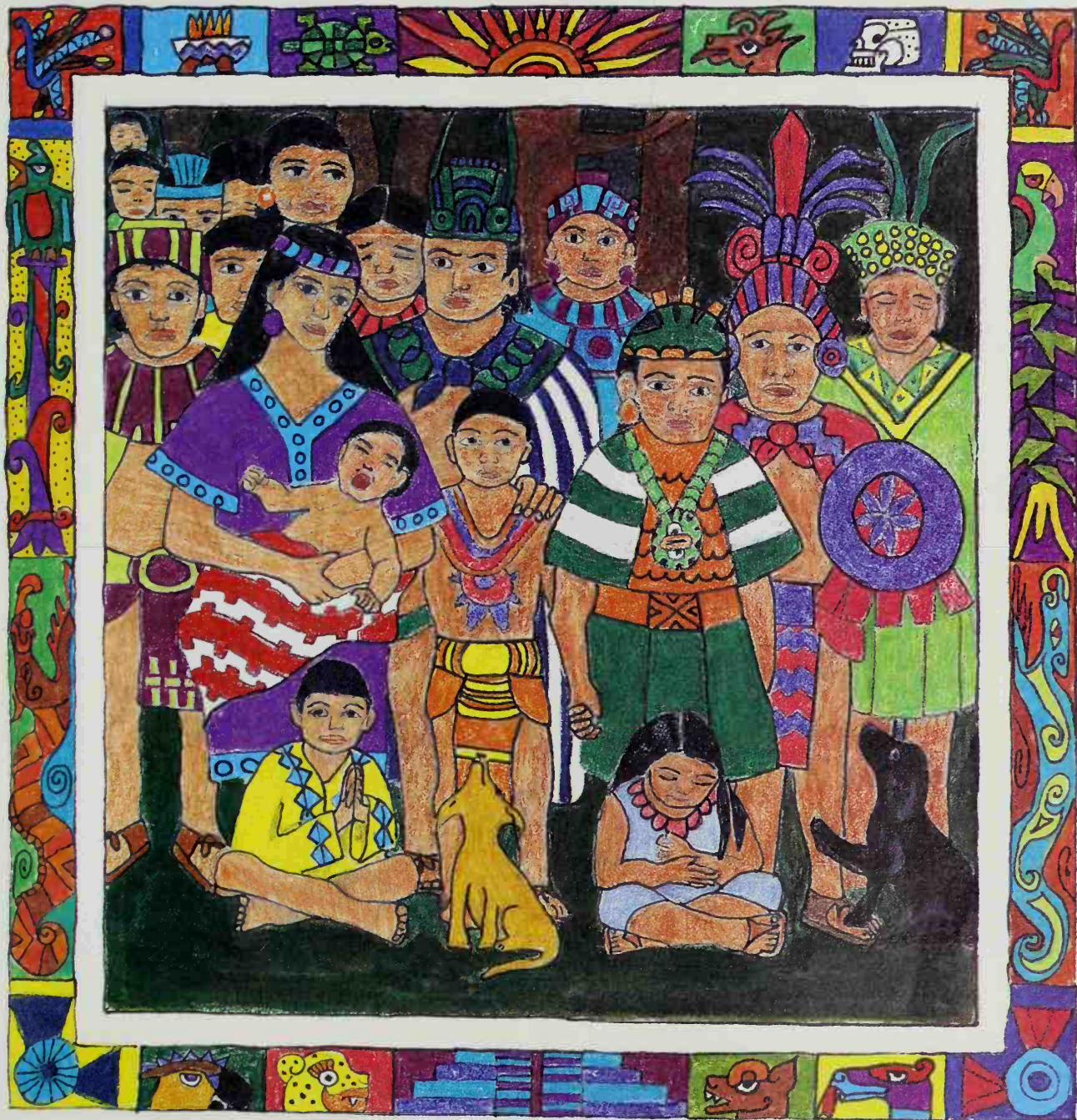
**D**icen que (they say that) long ago there  
was no food for the people of the earth.





**T**he people begged, the children cried,  
and Quetzalcóatl, the feathered serpent, heard  
their sadness.



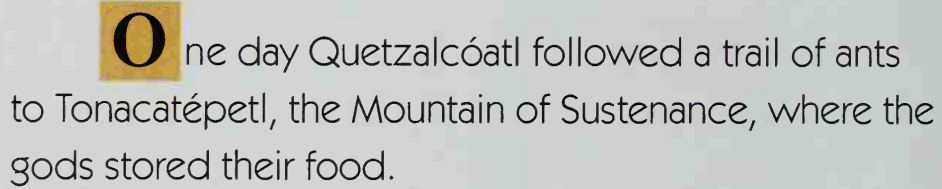






**Q**uetzalcoatl wanted very much to help  
the people that he loved.








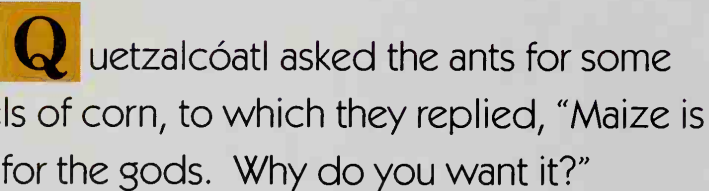








**T**here he met an army of giant Red Ants who were standing guard over a spectacular array of corn.



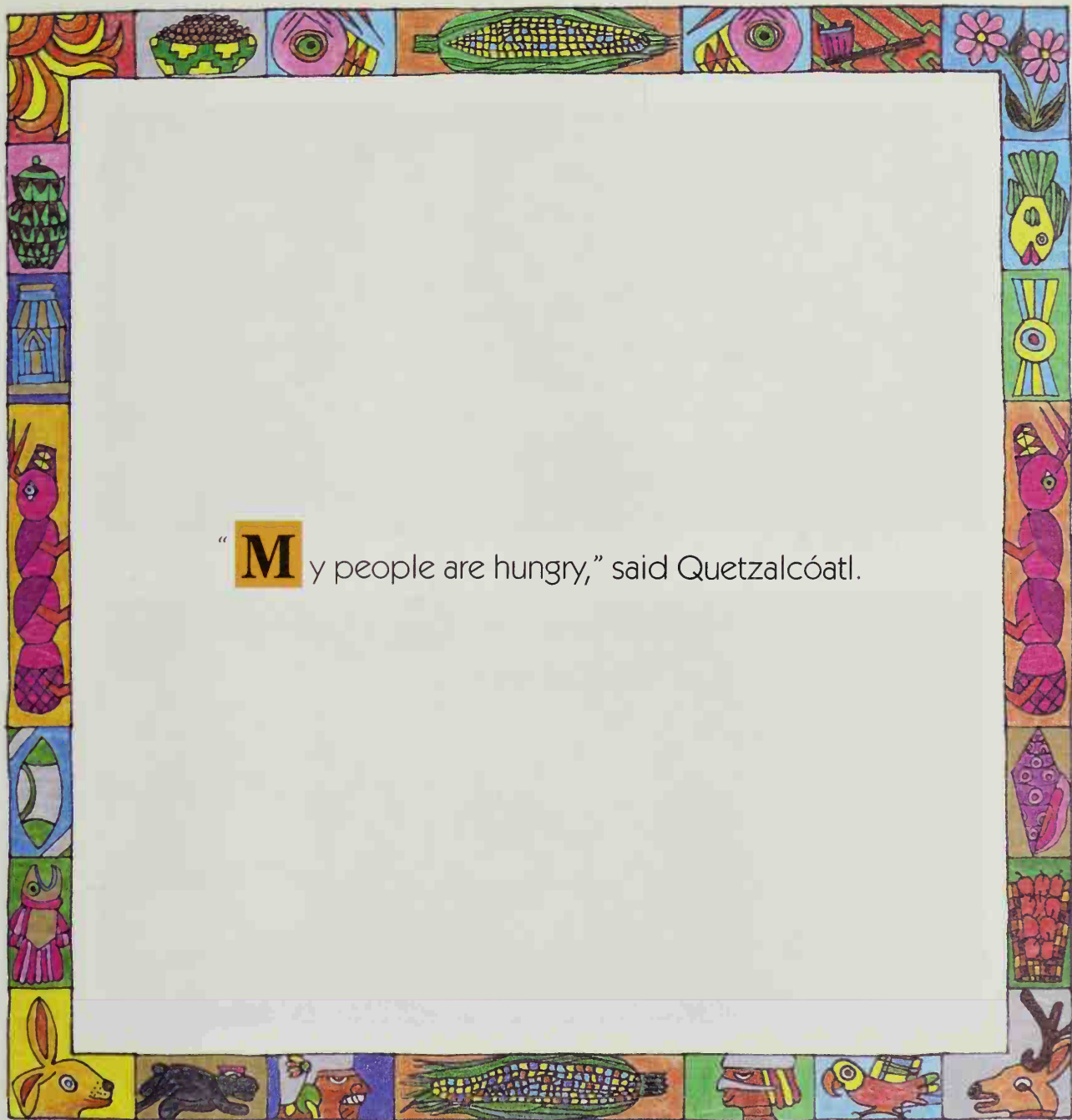












**M**y people are hungry,” said Quetzalcóatl.



“**A**re your people gods?” asked the army  
of Red Ants.

“No,” said Quetzalcóatl, “they are simply  
hungry people who live on earth.”

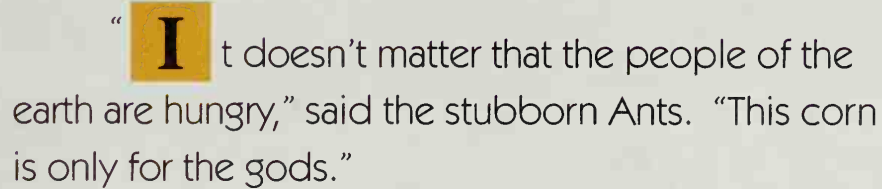


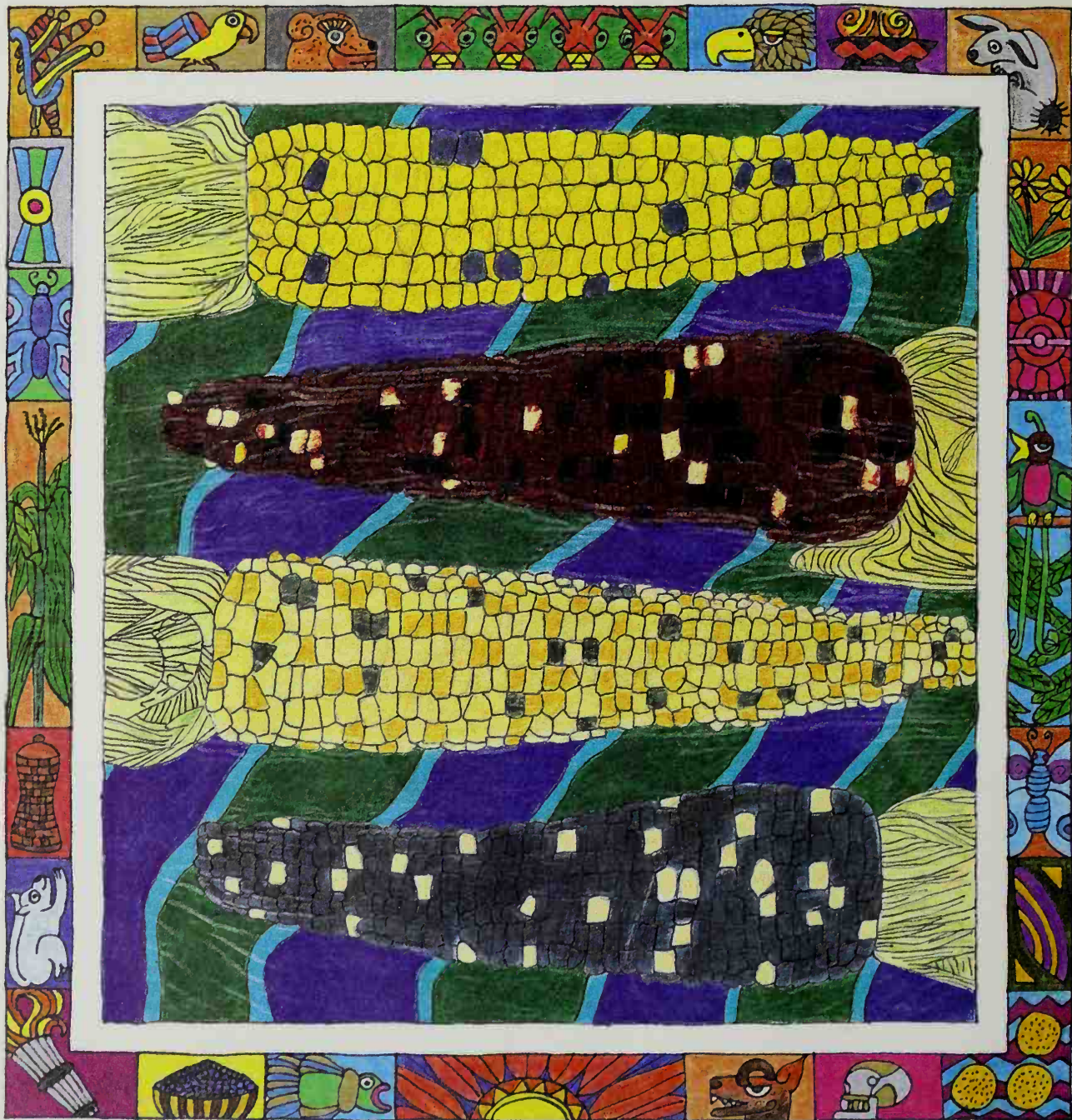




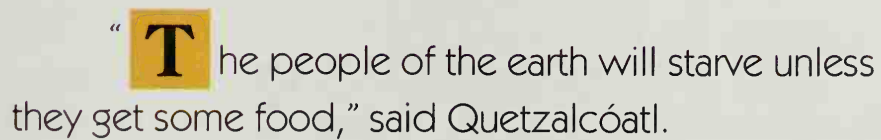


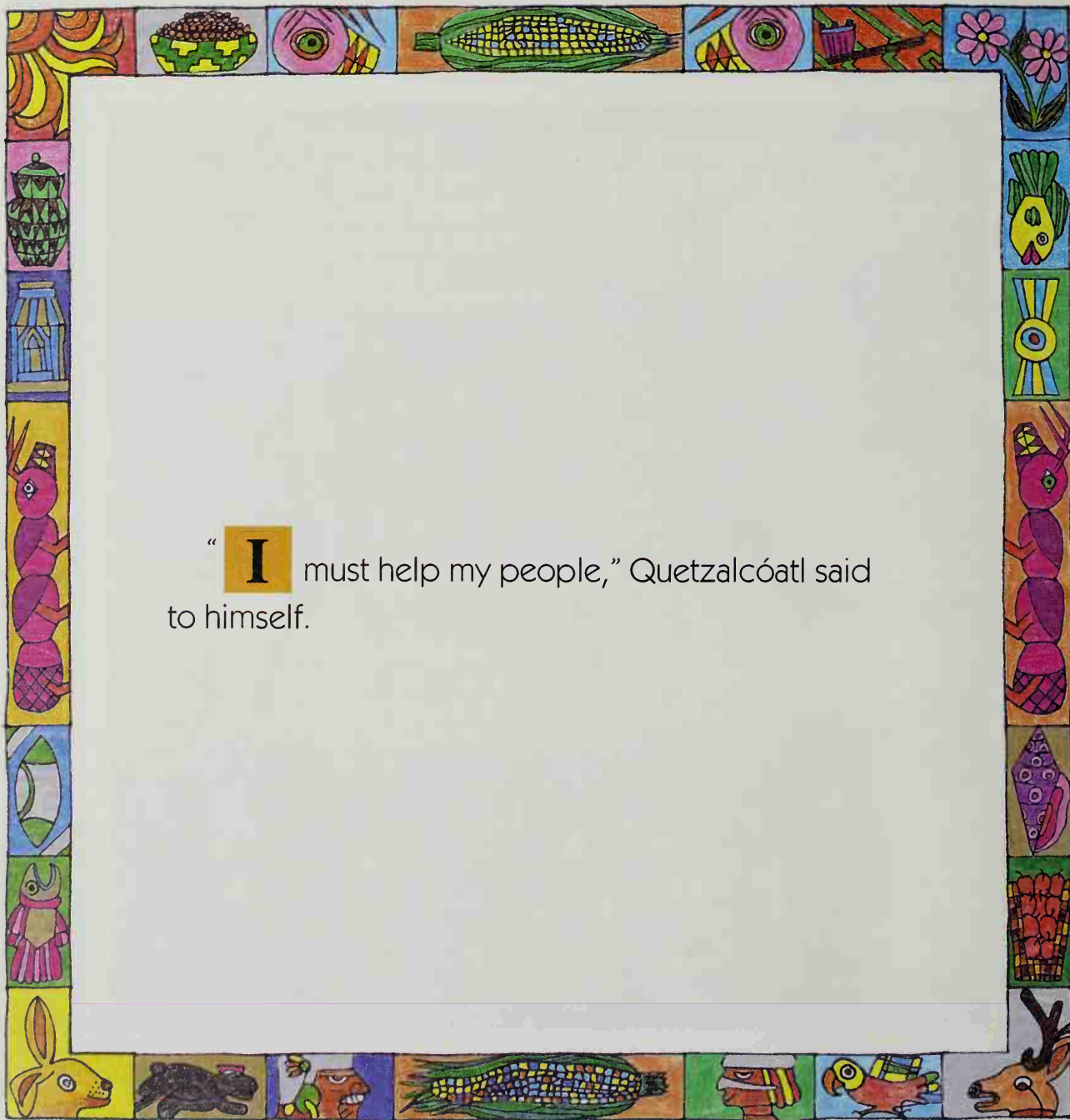












“**I** must help my people,” Quetzalcóatl said to himself.

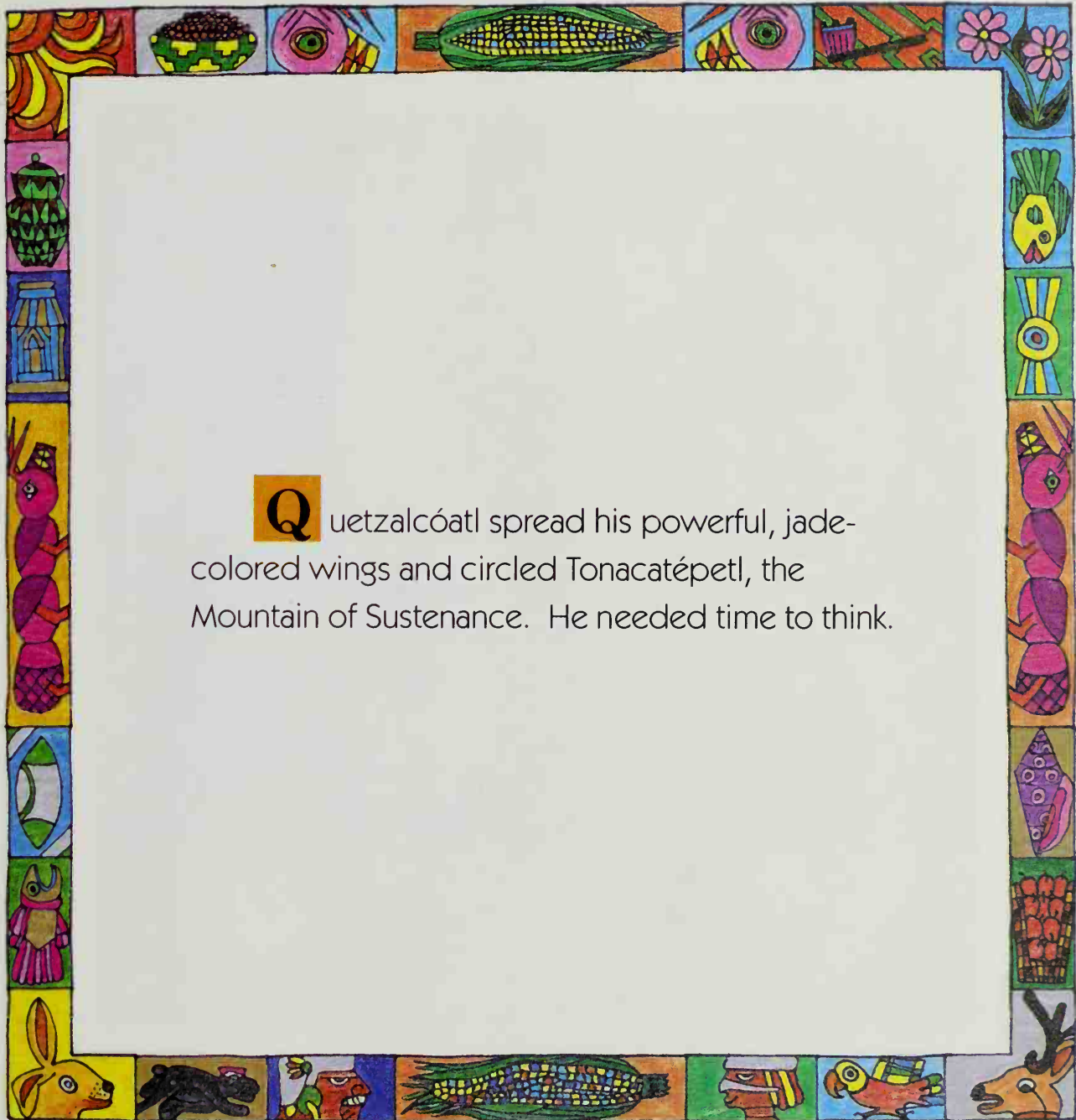




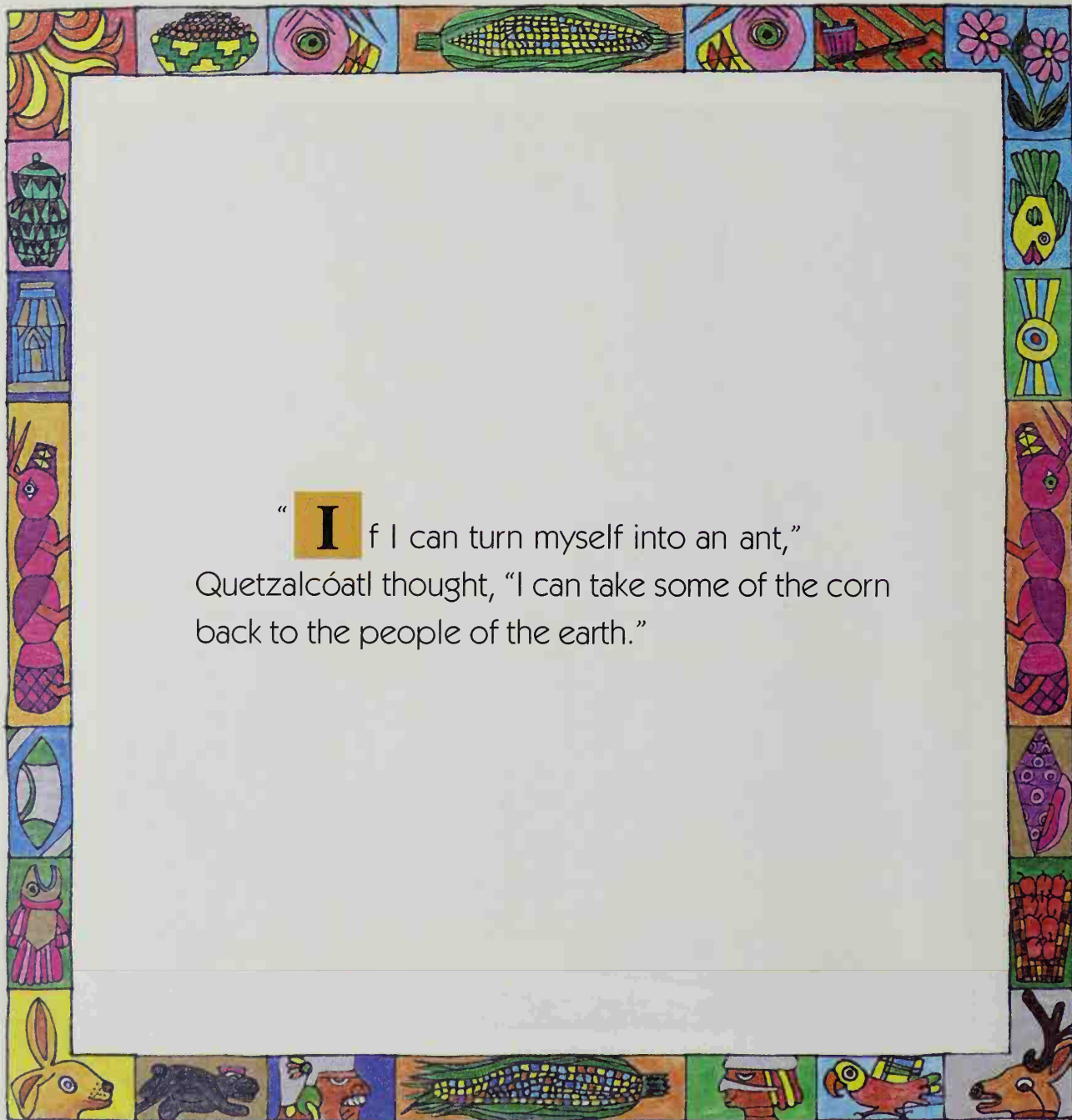








**Q** uetzalcóatl spread his powerful, jade-colored wings and circled Tonacatépetl, the Mountain of Sustenance. He needed time to think.

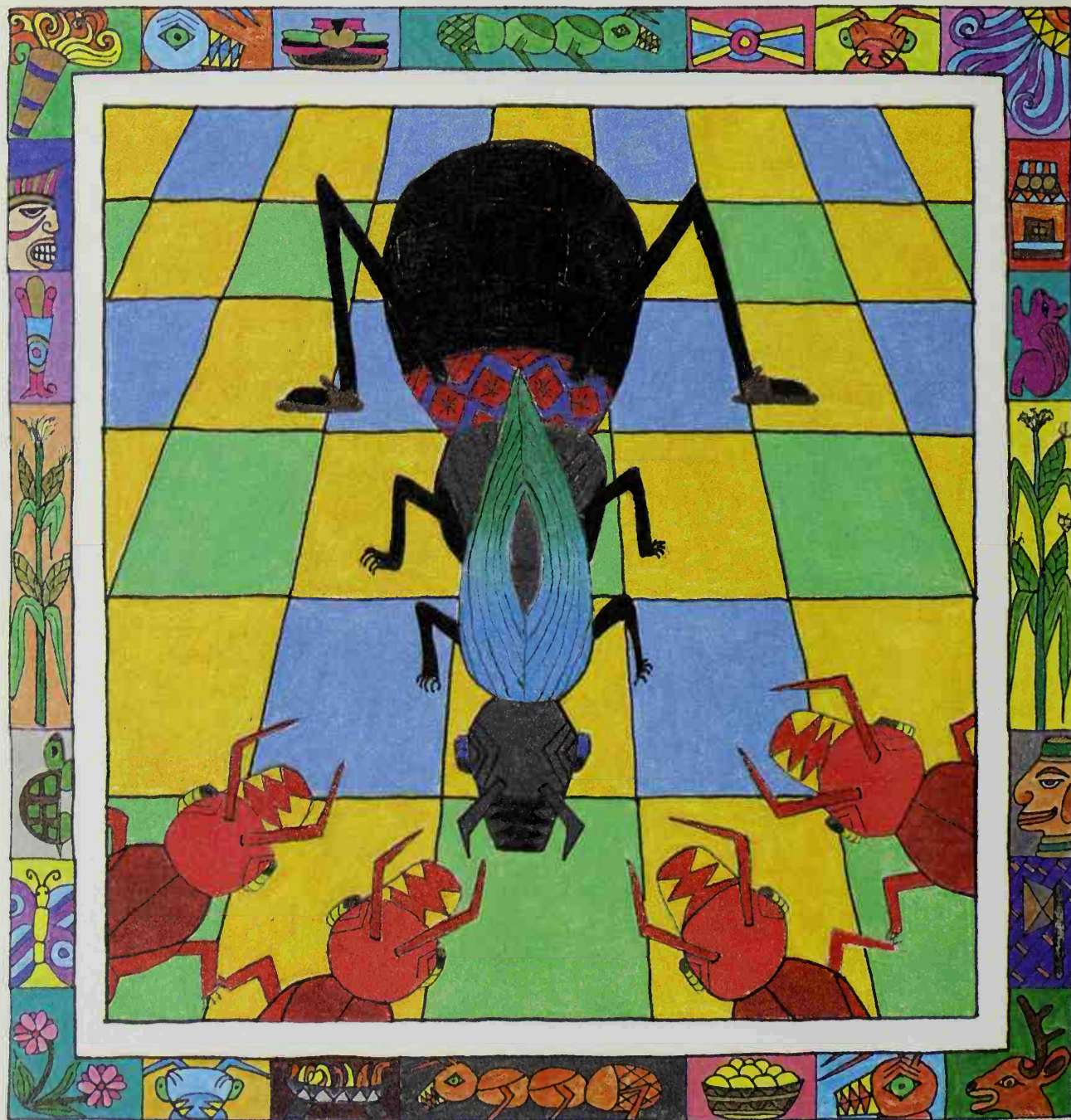


“ **I** f I can turn myself into an ant,”  
Quetzalcóatl thought, “I can take some of the corn  
back to the people of the earth.”

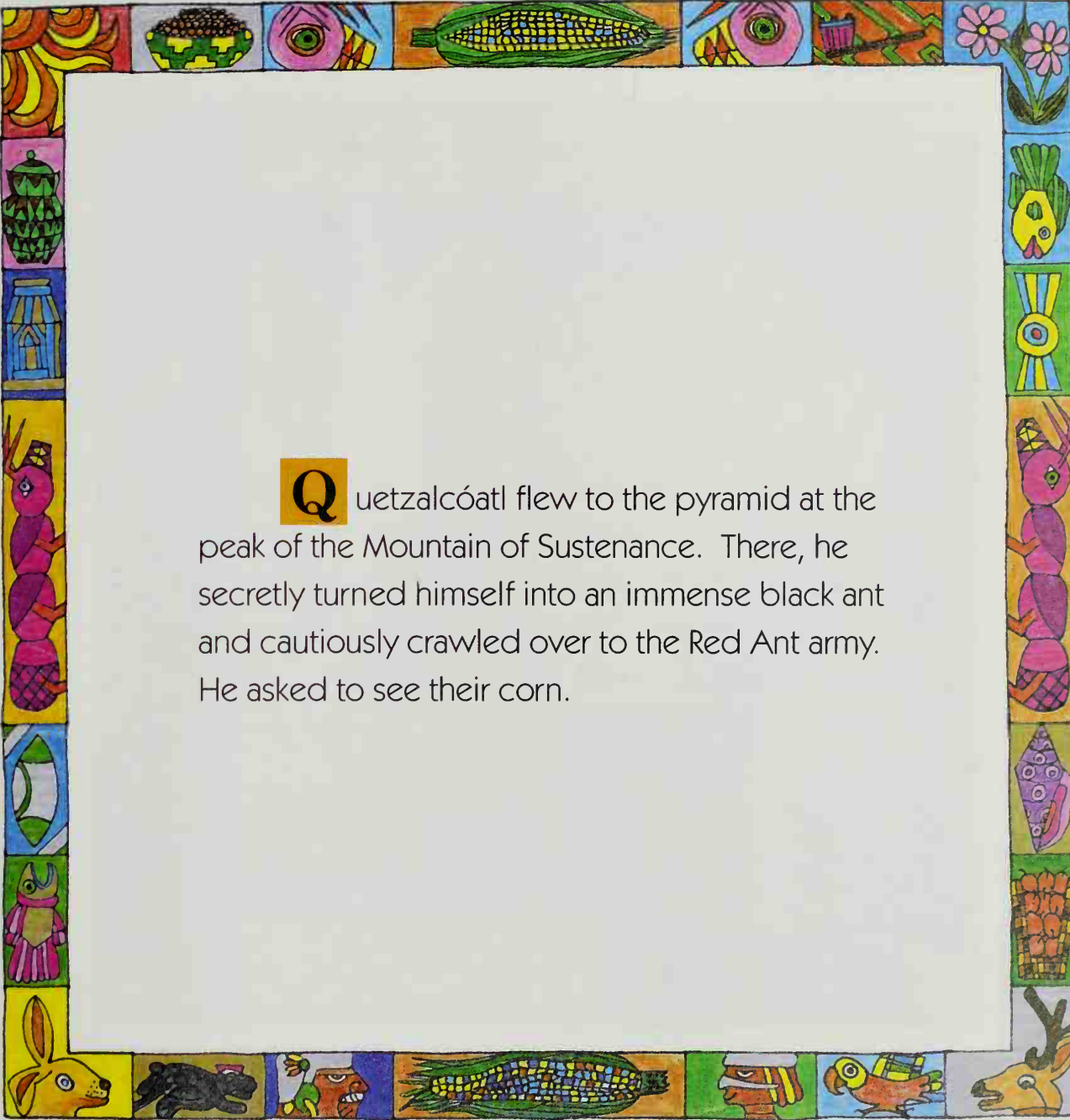




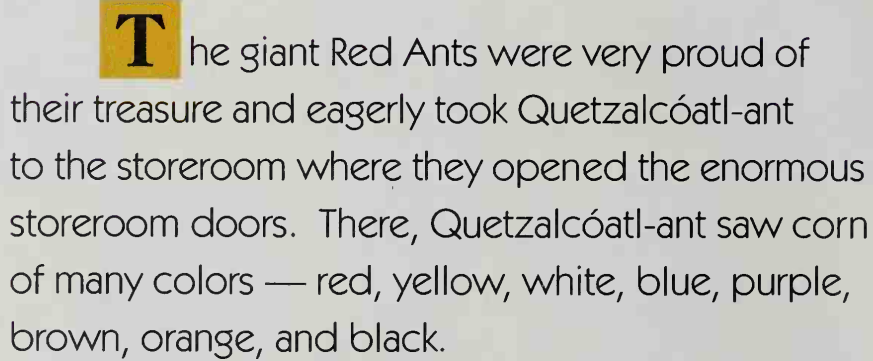








**Q**uetzalcoatl flew to the pyramid at the peak of the Mountain of Sustenance. There, he secretly turned himself into an immense black ant and cautiously crawled over to the Red Ant army. He asked to see their corn.
















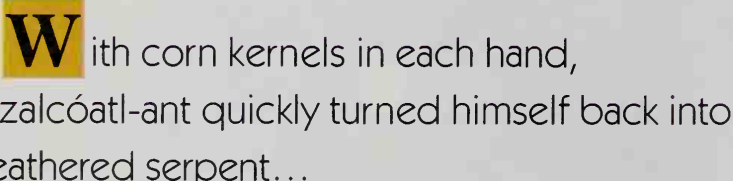
“**C**ould I hold some of this beautiful corn?”  
Quetzalcóatl-ant asked. “I would like to get a better  
look. I’ve never seen maize with so many lovely colors.”



**T**he giant Red Ants smiled proudly and handed Quetzalcóatl a kernel of each color.



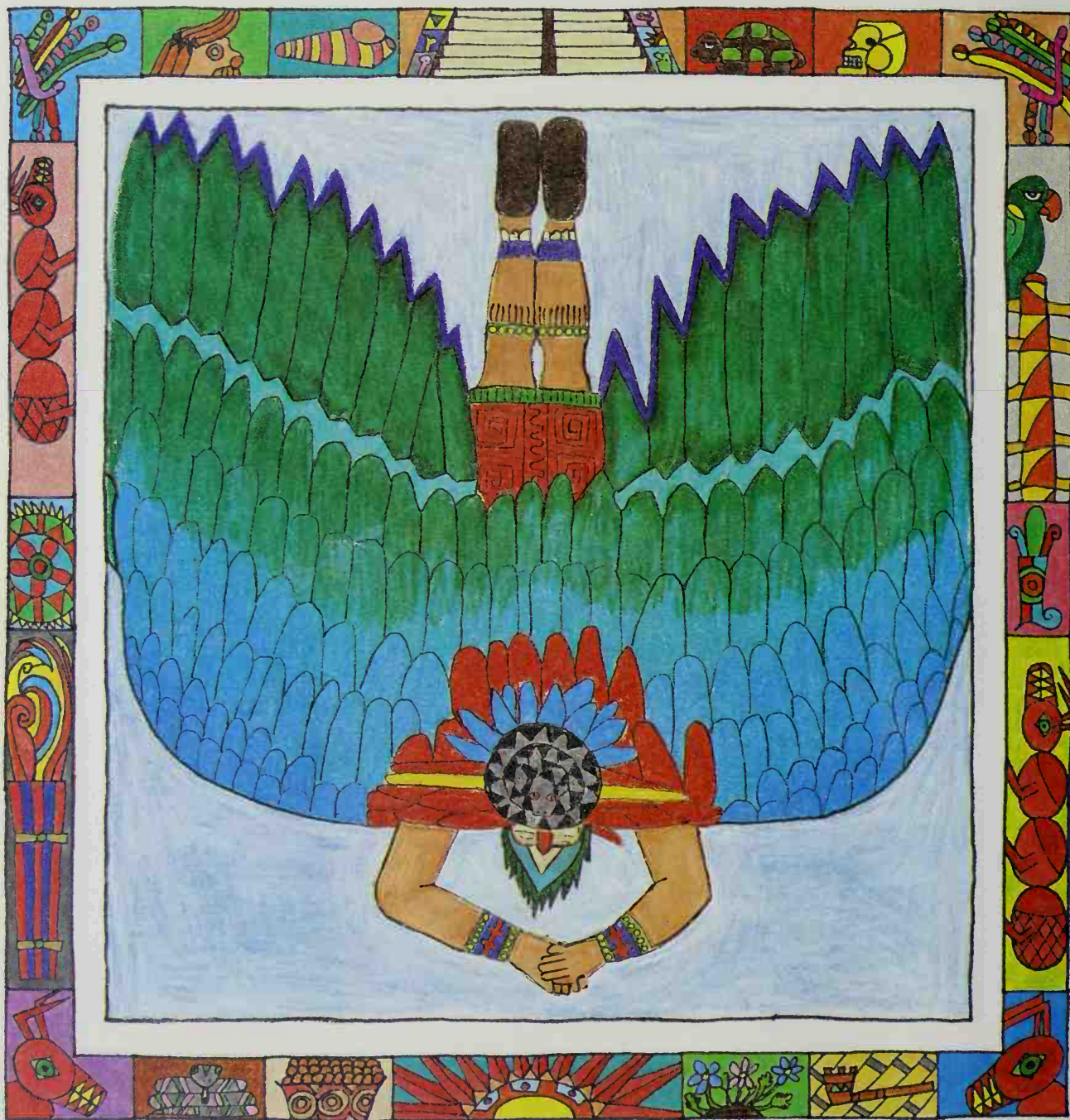




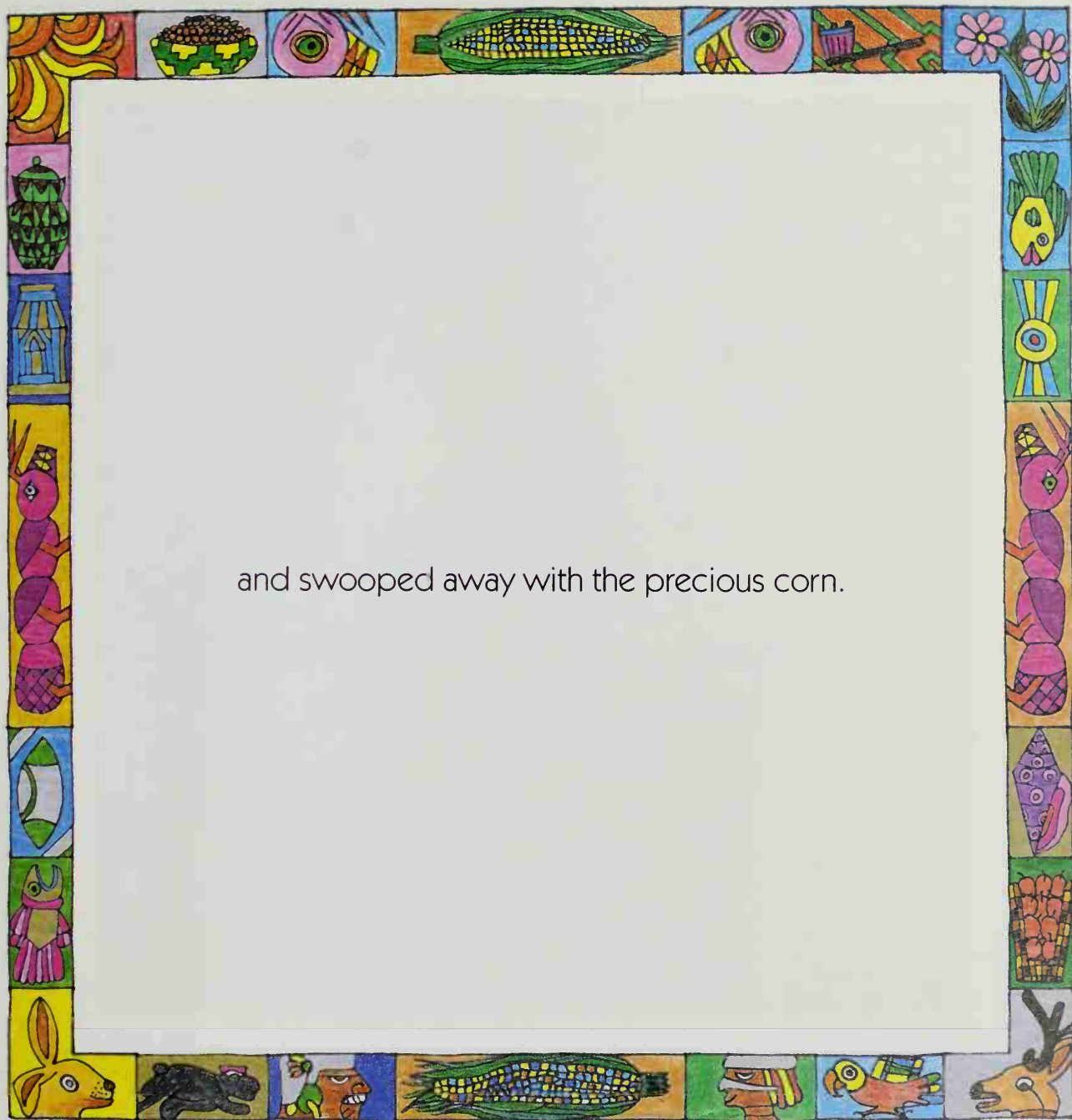


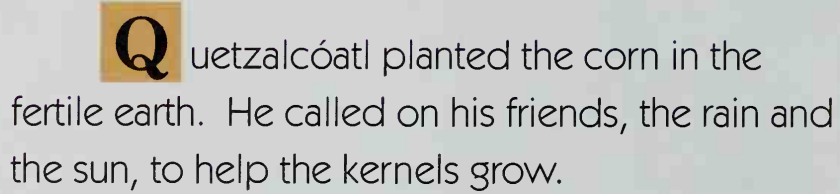












Soon Quetzalcóatl was able to share a gigantic harvest of corn with the people of the earth.

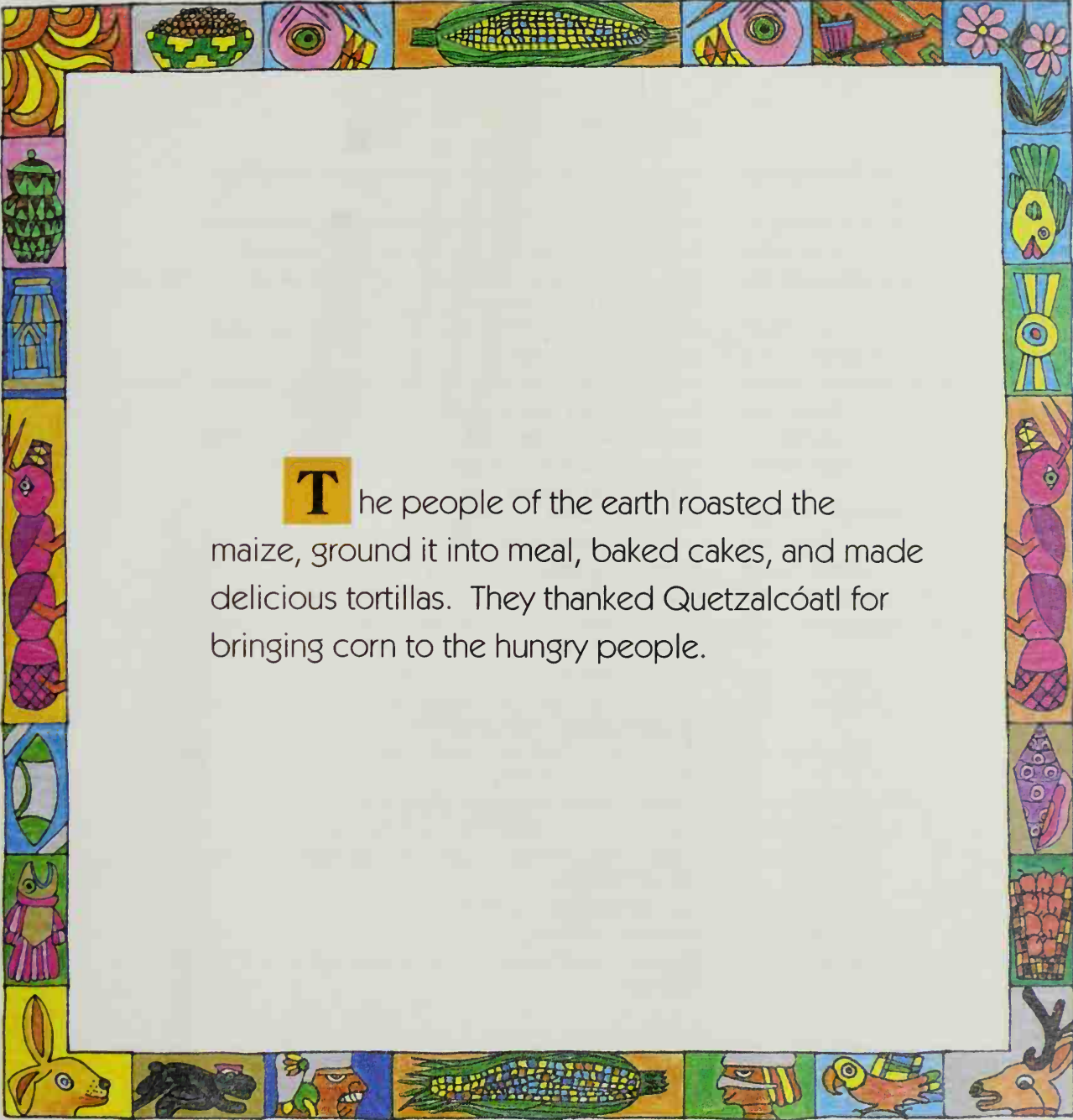












**T**he people of the earth roasted the maize, ground it into meal, baked cakes, and made delicious tortillas. They thanked Quetzalcóatl for bringing corn to the hungry people.

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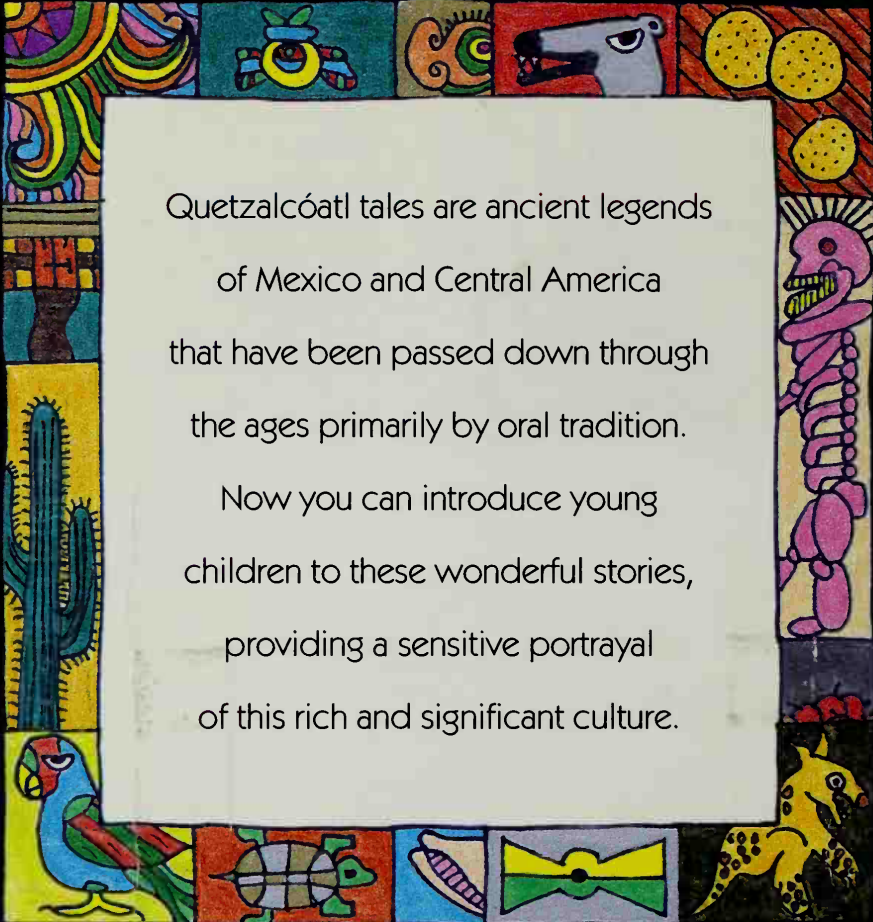
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